



KEY NOTE



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NETS

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Deadline for next Keynote is the 15th of the month

Hello FISTS! November sure has been an eventful month for me! I hadn't been feeling "like myself" for a couple months now, but I just thought it was because I was turning 40 and having some sort of mid-life crisis. Then I started feeling really short of breath when I did anything physical. I thought I just had a cold that was turning into bronchitis, didn't think much of it. But I knew something was wrong when I took a flight to Phoenix the first weekend of November and couldn't walk more than 20 feet down the airport concourse without stopping to catch my breath!

On the way home from the airport, I stopped at an 24 hour Urgent Care facility, they took an X-ray to make sure I didn't have pneumonia. Well, I didn't have pneumonia, but the X-ray showed that my heart was enlarged about twice the size it should be, and was pressing on my lung, which was why I couldn't breathe properly! I was shocked when the Doctor said "you are going to the hospital."

The doctors were very aggressive with the testing and diagnosing my problem, since it is unusual for a 40 year old woman to have congestive heart failure

(which is what they initially thought). After doing about a bucketfull of blood tests, they did an echocardiogram which showed I didn't have an enlarged heart after all, but a lot of fluid surrounding my heart, which made it look huge on the X-ray.

They performed a Paricardial Window operation, which drained over 300cc's of fluid from my heart sac and allowed them to take a biopsy of the sac. This also left a permanant little hole in the sac which will let any more fluid drain out so I shouldn't have this happen again. They are 99.9% sure that is was caused by a virus. Anyone can catch a virus, you can even get a virus in a muscle, mine just happened to settle in my heart. This caused fluid to accumulate, which made my heart not work as efficiently, causing more fluid, causing my blood pressure to get high, making things worse, not to mention the whole thing pressing on my lungs, making it hard to breathe! Whew!!

I'm home now, with a big 6" stapled-together incision down my front. The doctor had to be a comedian, saying that I can now claim to be a "Centerfold" since I have staples down my middle" Hi. I have to have some more blood tests and am taking a variety of pills for blood pressure, but the outlook is FB.

Thanks to WO8E/WK8F for taking over the FISTS paperwork during my week and a half hospital stay, and thanks to those who sent cards and good wishes. I tried to keep it quiet because I didn't want you to worry about me, but apparently it's hard to keep a secret around FISTS! I have to take it easy for a few weeks while the incision heals and they fine tune the medications for my blood pressure, but it shouldn't interfere with my FISTS stuff.

The best part is that I feel better than I have had in months! It's wonderful to be able to take a deep breath again. And I'm glad to know I wasn't depressed about a mid-life crisis, it actually had a physical cause - I wasn't getting enough oxygen! I'm not sure how this KeyNote is going to turn out, I'm writing this on a lap-top while resting in bed. I'll try and include as much stuff as I can find. Please be patient if you've written and asked me for something specific, I'll get to it as soon as I can!

On with the KeyNote!.....

FOR THE LOVE OF NOVICES

by George XE1/KG8DA

Have you noticed the many different type of hams there are? There are hams who specialize in every mode. Some are very technically inclined and some have practically no technical practice. There are contesters, ragchewers and Dxers. My brother Tom N2PC and I are good examples of these differences. He is into contesting and DX, I am not. In January we were both at our folks home in NJ for our younger brother's wedding. Pretty soon we found ourselves in our Dad's KF2RG shack. While turning the dial Tom caught a CW Mexican station exchanging quick RST and QTH reports, obviously a contester. Tim exchanged reports with the fellow and asked me if I would like to QSO him. "QSO?" I replied. "I didn't hear any QSO." We laughed at our differences.

So what does excite me? Well, let me tell you of one of my more memorable QSO's. It was my 7th. As I finished up with #6, Milt W8TZ dropped in on me. Briefly we chatted before he asked me to call him. We were only 2 miles apart. That began a relationship that was as close as I ever got to having an Elmer. We QSOed frequently and he always encouraged me and gave me pointers on cw. One of my biggest moments on radio was the day Milt complimented me on my fist. Milt is what I consider to be a ham radio "classic".

There are many other "classics" out there. Space doesn't permit all of the memorable people that I have known and encouraged me while on the air. These are the Ops who take the time to be personable with others, especially Novices and Technicians. Looking over my earliest log entries it is amazing to me how many real old timers answered my CQ when I was probably little more than an earache! This is what has become my passion in radio. I want to be a "classic", too. I love to answer that faltering CY, CY, CQ de.....and find that I am the first, or close to it, to QSO that new ham. I love to follow these folks and see the progress they make. Many remain special friends, providing special fellowship over the air waves. Meeting and encouraging the new ham, in the finest of modes (CW) is what I find most exciting. It's far more exciting than a brief contact with a new country.

To this day I still QSO many of those "classic" operators. Some of you are them. Each QSO adds to the memories that I treasure about ham radio.

One time I QSOed with N5PXA. It was his first CW QSO in 30 years of operation. We were both thrilled. Later he wrote me that he was hooked on CW in large degree because of the friendliness and patience shown him by the people on those parts of the bands.

If you don't already enjoy this activity, why don't you try it. It is gratifying, exciting and very fulfilling. Whatever it is that you like about ham radio; you can promote it by mentoring that new operator that you encounter on the air waves. I see this as the best way to promote code on the airways.

What a wonderful testimonial to the FISTS philosophy! By promoting the use of code on the air, we are

also preserving it! George added in his letter that he is very busy directing the Bible Institute where he teaches in Mexico but he squeezes in a quickie mobile QSO almost every day from his car.

This has lead to some ungraceful QRTs, particularly with FISTS KS4UV, when he suddenly had a flat tire in rush hour traffic, and N7CFA when he pulled up to his QTH and the family rushed out with his daughter Emily, who had to be rushed to the hospital for an allergic reaction.

George says he can imagine what WW2 fighter pilots have gone thru sending CW after working mobile CW, hi!

He also notes that he realizes a QSO with a real new operator may take an hour just to exchange the basic information, but don't begrudge them the time, they need it! This initial time of being so slow only lasts a few weeks if they stick with a regime of one QSO a day. Give 'em a break!

NOVICE ROUND-UP

These thoughts come from KC5ASD:

As the colder weather approaches here in Oklahoma, I find myself spending more time in the shack. There is lots of stuff to do like cleaning up, catching up on my reading, getting back to my goals like working at least 2 CW contacts per day, and preparing for the Novice Round-Up. Last year I worked the Round-Up as a Tech+ and this year as a General. I would like to help those sending logs in like I was helped last year.

Woops. Last year was the last round-up? I believe that was what I read last year. Boy, what a shame, I remember how I thought I would give it a try, maybe not send in my log, but at least make a few contacts in the contest style. My speed was a comfortable 10 wpm at the start. But a lot of those Generals, Advances, and Extras were sending at 15 to 20, even a little faster. I made a promise to myself I wouldn't ask anyone to QRS. Maybe repeat, but not QRS. And much to my surprise during the course of the week I was not asking for any repeats due to speed. I was actually copying faster. Now contest copy and test copy for the 13 wpm test are two different things but I can say that I certainly had confidence in my copy that had not been there before. And by the way I passed that 13 wpm test at the next session with flying colors. I might have been able to have done it without the Round-Up, but I'm sure it helped.

At the end of the contest I had 227 legal contacts and 32,000 points, nothing Earth shattering, but a respectable enough log to send it in. And now I have an award for the wall here in the shack that says Section Leader and Division Leader. I would like to say thanks to all of you FISTS and everyone else who helped me earn that wallpaper its as much yours as it is mine. It really is a shame that it was the last one. I'm sure it helped a lot of hams over the course of years to develop speed and also to develop a taste of contesting. The ARRL said they would replace it with other con-

The ARRL said they would replace it with other contests which would have special awards for Novices. It will not be the same but I hope they hived up to their words.

PS: Oh year, all of those contacts were CW of course. *Many of us FISTS feel the same way about the Novice Round-Up which is why we contacted the ARRL and are having our own FISTS version of the Round-Up! We didn't get the notice into the magazines to make it on the traditional January week, so it will be held in February. ARRL is not going to give us any special publicity (we are not an ARRL affiliated club) except for the notice in the Contest Corner, so please talk this up on packet, your club newsletters or anywhere you think Novices/Techs will hear. The dates are still being determined, but it will probably be the first week in February.*

SOLAR POWER for the HAM SHACK

by Bill Shanney KJ6GR

This project is a direct result of a desire to be ready for the next natural disaster to hit the Southern California area. The rains we had this year caused a 5 hour power outage at our home. The earthquake in Kobe, Japan just one year after the Northridge quake increased my sense of urgency. I had a "deep-cycle" marine battery for backup power but this is not adequate to run the ham gear, some lights and maybe the TV for news in a more serious emergency.

I'm a QRP enthusiast and many low power operators use battery power. An excellent introduction to solar power appears in the book Low Power Communications, Volume 2 edited by R. Arland K7YHA (Tiare Publications 19994) Chapter eight is written by M. Bryce WB8VGE who is very knowledgeable in the area of solar power. He presents a good summary on sizing a battery and charging system as well as some good advice on component selection. To give you readers an idea how it works I'll summarize my system.

First I looked at the power consumption in my shack for both nominal and worst case operation in an emergency. I then added few necessities like lights, TV and a radio to keep the family happy and informed in case of bad weather or an earthquake. A summary of these power requirements are shown in Table 1.

I chose to purchase golf cart batteries which are rated at 6 volts and 220 amp-hours. Two in series provide the required 12 volts, three in parallel increase the current capacity to 600 amp-hours. This will supply 4 days of power at my worst case load and 6 days at a nominal load (see Note 4). Some additional power will be provided by the solar charging system.

I installed two solar panels capable of producing 4.4 amps each. The worst case equivalent hours of sunlight on a horizontal panel in the Los Angeles area is 4.7 hours per day which yields a total of 41 amp-hours/day. This extends the worst case load time to 5 days and the nominal load time to over 7 days which is a reasonable amount of time to recover from an emergency. Deep cycle designs shouldn't be discharged more than 80% rated capacity. This amount of charging capacity is adequate of my normal daily needs. I can use an AC charger to recover after an emergency. Elevating the panels so they face the Sun gives considerable more power in the worst case winter months (see one of the books listed for details).

Installation is easy. The solar panels can be mounted on your roof or on the ground if you have a large yard. Lead acid batteries should always be kept outdoors, I have mine in an aluminum tool shed on the side of my house. The charge regulator should be mounted near the batteries. I chose a 30 amp regulator to permit future growth. Since voltage drop at high currents can be considerable, you must use heavy wire (like #2 or #4) between the batteries and the load, check a wire table and compute the voltage drop for your peak load. Keep the drop less than 0.25 volts.

Articles appeared the QST in March, April and May 1990 entitled "Practical Battery-Back-Up Power for Amateur Radio Stations" by G. Thurston W4MLE. Batteries, charging and maintenance are covered in this informative series. W4MLE used discarded batteries from a telephone switching system which are not "deep cycle" types but is interesting in its own right for continuous duty applications.

I use a 1500 watt inverter to handle large AC loads, like my FT-1000D. My entire shack is run from the solar charged battery system. I'm very satisfied with the outcome of this project. I hope some of you become motivated to consider battery power as a good thing to do for the environment and/or emergency preparedness.

For sources of solar energy products near your home, consult the Yellow Pages or "Home Power" magazine.

Table 1: KJ6GR Power Requirements

Item	Avg Current or Power*	On Time (hrs/day)		Battery Drain	
		Nominal	Worst Case	Nominal	(Amp-hours) Worst Case
HF Transceiver	6A (Note 1)	3	3	18	18
2M Transceiver	1.5A (Note 2)	3	12	4.5	18
Lights/Accessories	2A	3	5	6	10
House Lights	100W (Note 3)	-	5	-	56
TV (19" Color)	70W	-	5	-	39
Radio	20W	-	5	-	11
Daily Current Drain				28.5 A-H	152 A-H (Note 4)

*110 Volt AC Power, converted to 12 Volt battery amp-hours assuming an inverter with 75% efficiency (Amp hours = AC Power ÷ .75 ÷ 12V x On Time)

Notes:

- 1 - HF 100W transceiver using 1 amp receive, 20 amps transmit, 25% transmit duty cycle
- 2 - 2M 50W transceiver using 0.5 amp receive, 10 amps transmit, 10% transmit duty cycle
- 3 - Four 23 watt fluorescent lights, each puts out the same amount of light as a 90 watt incandescent bulb
- 4 - Significantly less power should actually be required, using 50 watts on HF, (CW requires less power than SSB), 10 watts on 2 meters and only 2 lights on continuously reduces the worst case daily current drain to less than 100 amp-hours nominal

Mac WOAP read a couple things in last months KeyNote that "shook" him a bit, I was happy to hear his comments:

The "Q" signal QSD was never intended to be used as an expression of sending ability. The signal was used to inform the sending station that he had a mechanical or electrical problem. This might be caused by dirty key contacts, a faulty keying relay or any one of several other electrical faults or bad adjustments at the sending end. Although never officially recognized, the term QLF (send with your left foot) was one way to inform the transmitting station that he was butchering the Morse.

The recent revelation that the expression "HI" for laughter came from American Morse and translates "HO HO" brings to mind a few other Morse hang-overs. We terminate a transmission with the expression SK (sometimes sent VA). This is a hand-me-down from wire circuits where it was sent . . . _ _ and in American Morse read as 30, the Phillips code designator for "no more - end". Newsmen sending a press item to their paper would end with "30". Another "Morse" derivative is the use of "ES" for the word "AND". The Morse expression . . . with a half space between the first and second dot was used for the ampersand (&). In American Morse four dots translated into four different characters: the letters H, Y, and Z, as well as the "&" depending on the space between the dots. Confusing? Not for an old Morse Operator!

I am a new-comer to FISTS but an old-time telegrapher. I use both codes and delight in working another ambidextrous operator and mixing the codes as we send. I am not a bit concerned about the threat of a change in International regulations allowing amateur licenses to those without Morse ability. This country has been doing so for the past several years. When they adopted the VE system for examination and substituted a "code recognition" for "code copying" as a Morse requirement they adulterated the amateur examination. Over fifty percent of today's "extras" couldn't take 20 words a minute if their life depended on it. (I spent 30 years with the FCC).

Thanks for taking the time to write Mac, you sound like an OM with some interesting opinions, I hope we hear more from you!

FISTS QSL BURO

The FISTS QSL Buro is in full swing and growing, thanks to John N8FU. He sent this article to help you understand the way it works. If you have been on the air at all lately, chances are you have a card or two waiting - make it easier for John and send him some SASEs!

"The FISTS QSL Bureau works this way:
All you need to do is send QSLs for ANY FISTS MEMBER WORLDWIDE to me, John N8FU. Also tell those FISTS you work to send cards for you to me. Also, all

FISTS should have at least one SASE with 32 cents postage on it on file at the bureau. A business sized envelope (#10) is best because all QSLs are not the same size especially those from foreign countries. If you want QSLs as they come in, monthly or as the amount of cards equals the postage (usually 5 or so) builds up, let me know. I will let you know when you run low on envelopes. I send QSLs for DX to England at least once a month. This month two mailings will be sent. If you get QSLs at the bureau and don't have an SASE on file, expect to get a radiogram. I found this to be the most effective way to notify FISTS members. My address is at the top of the first page of this newsletter."

WELCOME TO THE NEW FISTS

1988 - Phil KB2VQX in Marcy NY (WD8OVC)
1989 - Sam WB5ZJN in Stow OH (K8OUA)
1990 - Rich KC7LSO in Longview WA (N7CFA)
1991 - John KF4BHR in Crestwood KY (WZ8C/
1992 - open
1993 - open
1994 - Frank WD4DSS in Rome GA (WB2EZG)
1995 - Rob KB8ZZQ in Menter OH (KB2SWI)
1996 - Doc W2QBR in Uniondale NY (?)
1997 - Dee WA2YPL in Uniondale NY (?)
1998 - Art W3YK in Las Cruces NM (WB7PEI)
1999 - Bert W4JTU in Miami FL (KS4UV/K7WF)
2000 - George VE3INB Oshawa, ONT (N3LBC)
2001 - Bill N5FIH in Woodlands TX (WB7PEI)
2002 - John K3WWP in Kittanning PA (KB2BFQ)
2003 - Paul KB7ZTV in Redmond WA (WB2FXK)
2004 - Carl WB7DJR in Mountail Terrace WA (KA8OQF)
2005 - Ric KB8WZV in Mackinaw City MI
2006 - June KA7TIF in Longview WA (K7WF)
2007 - Marie W6JEP in Lancaster CA (W6DDB)
2008 - Larry WR2F in Dover DE (WB2EZG)
2009 - Bud WA2BQI in Jamestown NY (WA0RSK)
2010 - Armon K4FOM in Naples FL (WB2FXK)
2011 - Mike N3OUE in Easton MD (W19X)
2012 - Bill AD4FA in Winchester KY (WB3KMX)
2013 - Paul W0NMB in Hiwassee AR (NY2V)
2014 - Lorille KC7LSN Longview WA (WB7PEI)
2015 - Oscar KC4AKQ Panama City FL (KB0JTS)
2016 - Bill AA2YH in Colonia NJ (N3LBC)
2017 - Pete WY6F Rancho Cordova CA
2018 - open
2019 - Marty E4WCW Hendersonville NC (AE4AZ)
2020 - Curt KA2MJV Binghamton NY (KB2QLK)
2021 - Denis AA0YX Grand Junction CO (WA0RSX)
2022 - Lon AA1KC in Machias ME (N1HYF)
2023 - Arthur W7DER in Longview WA (KB7SVA)
2024 - Joe W8DYF in Steubenville OH (K8OUA/KE8SX)
2025 - Joe N2USK in E. Greenbush NY
2026 - Elaine WB2IFE in Uniondale NY (WZ8C)
2027 - Hans AA1KU in Conway NH (KA1IIQ)
2028 - Ray KE4HOS in Cottonwood TN (WB2FXK)

SUNDAY QSO PARTY

Despite lousy band conditions, Scott KE3NV is doing an admirable job keeping the Sunday QSO Party alive. He has been faithfully sending me the lists of weekly check-ins, and wouldn't you know it, I can't put my paws on any of them! But don't let that stop you from checking out the Party on 14.058 at 2000Z on Sundays!

NOVICE ROUND UP HELP

As I mentioned earlier in the newsletter, we are going to be sponsoring the Round-Up, which means there is going to be a lot of paperwork! Pete K8OUA is going to need help! If you would like to volunteer to help Pete with the log checking, score verifying or whatever else he needs done, please get in touch with him.

DAYTON 1996

It's official! We got permission to have booth number C-15 at the Dayton Hamvention next year! Make plans to be there, I hear we have a dozen or so FISTS coming out from Washington state. And Geo is going to try and make it - hope you can too!

FISTS PHOTOBOOK

Thanks to all for sending in your photos, I am taking a sample sheet to the printer with this newsletter so you can get a better idea of what we are talking about. If it is ready in time, I'll include it with this newsletter, if not next month! All we need from you is a snapshot - so your face is about an inch big. Don't trim it yourself, you might make it too small. The book is going to look great, I know you will be impressed! Send the photo to Ken VK8F 25206 Hayes, Roseville MI 48066. And please note that the club supplies can be ordered from the same address from WO8E. Stickers are \$5/200, club logo pins \$3.50 postpaid.

Corrections, Congrats and Chat

N3QEN was sponsored by George W3HK, not KL3HK as I listed in the last newsletter - sorry George and thanks for renewing your subs anyway, hi!

Chuck KB2SWI overheard a warmth exuding CQ from George, mobile in Mexico as XE1/KG8DA which he answered from his QTH of Saranac Lake NY, near Lake Placid, site of the 1932/1980 Winter Olympics. "Think of poor me with my mittens", pleaded Chuck. "Remember me with my flyswatter," George answered. Sounds like a classic case of the 'grass being greener on the other side, guys!' Hi (or HEE or HO, whichever is politically correct now!)

Congrats to Greg KC8ASP for his upgrade to Advanced, he's keeping his callsign for now!!

From the Handi-Hams newsletter, thanks to Jim KF5A: W6ADO in N. Hollywood CA runs code practice 24

hours a day on 7099kHz. His speeds range from 2-20wpm and are sent by computer. Test is from a variety of sources.

Many thanks to Jack WA2FVL for the multitude of info sent on tower raising! It's got me inspired, and now that I am on the road to recovery I sure hope to get that darned thing up. Even if I don't get the quad up this winter, I'd at least like to get my G5RV up that high as an inverted Vee! I'll get the photos back to you ASAP, thanks so much!

Margie N1QLF sent along a darling photo of her granddaughter "practicing code"! Margie said she has been teaching her CW since she was born and now at 14 months, her granddaughter can send her name! When we get our scanner, I'll be sure to include that photo in the newsletter!

Thanks to all, from the bottom of my now fluid-free heart (hi) for the cards and notes and for keeping me in your thoughts and prayers. Knowing that so many friends are pulling for me gives me a lot of strength, and I'm sure I will heal up just fine! 73/88/33 Nancy

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To order this truly revolutionary antenna kit, send a check or MO for \$29.95 plus \$4 S&H to Hamco, Dept O, 3333 W. Wagon Trail Dr. Englewood CO 80110. TAPE ONLY reorders are avail for \$19.95 plus \$4 shipping and handling

From Across the Pond de Geo **G3ZQS**

GREETINGS

Welcome to November good people. As I write this, the weather is more reminiscent of a late spring day than of the Autumn that it is. The leaves are slow to turn though we lost many through recent high winds but it remains happily mild. Queer atmospheric conditions have been affecting the bands in a variety of ways. The other evening, 20m was as flat as a cows face whilst 80m was unbelievably lively and again rewarded me with much chewing of the fat and not an insignificant measure of lamp swinging as I encountered ex RN operators.

I continue to receive complaints from members concerning the activities of RTTY stations during the last RTTY contest. These thoughtless individuals migrated as low as 3.560 and left the QRP segment on 3.560 virtually unusable but without equipment to resolve the transmissions, there was no way of telling whether it was commercial or amateur. I must confess a desire to sit right on the edge of these transmissions, turn up the wick and call CQ with QRS. When they are heard on 14.058 of course I do just this but 80m is a different ball game because of course they may be legitimate commercial services.

I have a report of some station screaming out CQ on 14.057 (uncomfortably close to our starting point of 14.058) and half the world responding to no avail. It transpires that he has one of these new transceivers which actually caused him to listen on the WRONG BAND. At the present moment, I am in the process of ordering one of the new FT1000MPs and I will have to watch out that the same thing does not happen to yours. My local friend Ernie (no he is not a FISTS member) intercepted a packet bulletin from a US station advising that he had noted an advertisement offering WINDOWS95 compliant disc boxes which would also accommodate 5 1/4 discs as well as CDs. The gullibility of some people leaves me in no doubt that he would have enjoyed a flood of orders.

THE SLOW MORSE NET

Got a letter from Ray, G0VSS who's son Alex (2E0AJS) is running this. Seemingly I got the times skewed up (I distinctly heard someone say "that's nothing unusual") Alex is due to take his 12 wpm test on October 1 and is looking forward to taking his RAE later but there is limited tuition available in the area.

The frequencies/times should read:

Sundays	0800 UTC (0900 local)
Thursdays	1800 UTC (1900 local)

The existence of the net has been made known to Esde and the RSGB and whilst initially intended to attract the Novice, it is producing more licenced operators:

G0VFV, GW0LTH, G4KXZ, G0RGV, G0TWN, G10VVJ, G0NTR, G0IMM, G5GZ, ON6MN, G4JRE, G4KIJ, G2CIL, 2E0AIR, GD3FXN, GW0VMR, G4PTE, 2E0AMG, G0PMY, GW3PRL, GW0SGG, G4RBE, G4KIK, G0IZU and G0WIW.

Alex would like to thank especially Martin, GW3PRL and Nigel, G0WIW who regularly join the net and provide an enormous amount of help and advice.

He was delighted to find ON6MN and would be pleased to hear from other EU stations particularly from Germany since the lad is "Lernen zur Deutsch" at school.

There's a fair old smattering of FISTS in there so thanks to all for their support.

ALL SINGIN N' DANCIN

Well I finally took the plunge. Based on the premise that you cannot take it with you I ordered the FT100MP which came RRP with all filters fitted including the Collins Mechanical. I will not bore you with the more sophisticated details such as programming options etc. but the receiver section took me by surprise. Having long maintained that with the fitted filters in the old FT102 I was gonna be hard pressed to find a rig with comparable CW performance. How wrong can you be. The receiver is a triple conversion and you are given the option of 250 or 500Hz filters on cw and you can choose to apply the same filter to the final IF stages or mix 'em. For instance, I can set the 2nd IF (8.215) to either 250Hz, 500Hz, 2.0 Khz or 2.4khz, switch 'em around twixt final (475khz) and 2nd IF or set both to the same value.

On 250Hz, anything other than the barest touch on the IF Shift/Width control left me with a deaf receiver and these, coupled with a superb notch filter are just about all that could be demanded.

There is a wide variation available for AF pitch - I chose 600Hz - and much to my surprise, the DSP polished off the edges. Havent yet had the opportunity to try it with the Insect as it is out on loan but short of falling below the ambient noise level, even the weakest of signals can be enhanced with this combination. To put it mildly, I'm chuffed!

NEW KEYER KIT

G4OOS sent me a packet to say that he has picked up the new ICMOS super keyer3".

Cost is 60 dollars post paid and features six larger memories as well as some additional operating features. Commands remain essentially the same but with a few additions and if you order two or more kits for the same address and paid for at the same time, the cost is 58 dollars each post paid. He has been using the mark 2 for about 4 yrs now and would recommend this keyer as the best keyer in the world today. At £37.50p and a bit of home brewing it just cannot be beaten and in this country you would have to pay something like £100.00 to £150.00.

It is available from: IDIOM PRESS, P.O. BOX 1025, GEYSERVILLE, CA 95441, U.S.

THE STRAWBERRY BASKET

G0NKO is just one member who has expressed his disapproval of their actions to the RA. G0IZU. Listing in the post Michael. Current full listing occupies 4 close typed A4 pages so it is neither practical or fair on other users to monopolise GB7DEO with such a tome.

GM3LGM. Bill can be heard from his TS450 on all bands via a recently acquired vertical. Says it gets him around Europe but in view of the condx, you may well find that DX is forthcoming soon. You seem to have a problem with RF there Bill. A G3KHZ pcb lasted him about three weeks followed by an ETM1C which survived for 8 months so he is back on his trusty homebrew which although it resembles a rats nest has thus far survived. When in doubt, protect input, output and power source points with ferrite beads. I point you in this direction because my G3KHZ ran as sweet as a nut until I took it on the NFD some years ago following which it went kaput. The following year, I lugged my contestor CK2 over to the scout hut to operate MORSE and it came back sans all but one memory. In both cases, Bill (G2AKK's) rig and tuner were in use. GW4PXQ. George is a wee bit upset about his QSL returns. So many stations issue the magic words "QSL SURE" but many of these do not arrive. I guess there will always be stations who say this George and really mean "If I get your card then I will send one in return". This of course means that the cards spend a lot of time languishing in various bureaux and I note a QSL from Crimea which arrived recently and was dated from 1993. CW however still provides the best return rate of all modes. G0FMY Steve, applauds the Novice scheme and thus far has worked many of them. He is back to his Howes CTX80 with a dc receiver since the FT7 went sick on 40m cw. G0GSW. Hi Vic. Always nice to hear from you. For the past 2 years, he has been undergoing extensive remodelling of his ticker with a valve replacement, a double by-pass and just to add insult to injury, he was operated on for the "old man's" complaint. This year marks the 52nd anniversary of his entry into the RN as a HO signalman. Tempus he doth fugit Vic. G0GKZ. Laurie - not being too experienced in such things - spent a frustrating period trying to work out while everyone was calling "CQ NST" before the penny dropped and realised a contest was in full flow. Hi. (sri Marion, Hee). G3WP. Jack, one of our favourite Ots, comments on the jamming device found near Aylesbury. Yes it's pretty frightening Jack when such a device is a dangerous booby trap. I wonder when we will get some results from the DTI investigation? At his daughters wedding on Aug 26, held at the local cricket club, he began the festivities with lager, sampled numerous wines and rounded up with a glass of champagne. He remembers going onto the balcony for a photo session but from then on there's an expansive blank. Oooh Hic Hic. Just to rub it all in, a member of the family turned up with a video showing Jack doing the Egyptian sand dance. G0TAW. Patrick has been having things rough also recently. Three months in dock for open heart surgery and the fitting of a Cardioverter cum defibrillator. The latter gismo is sensitive to RF but there is not sufficient level in the shack to cause any ill effects.

ODDS N` ENDS

G3JPZ, Ian, found me on 80 t'other day and I men-

tioned that some lid was frying bacon on the QRG. "Don't talk to me about lids" was his reply - I'm looking at 'em all day long. Turns out he is involved in the manufacture of lids (or perhaps caps) for boxes of some sort measuring less than an inch in length of copper sheet with a routed edge to fit on the containers. Tnks for the samples Ian - now I'm looking for a sandwich box small enough !

G0FVS Jim has hooked up with the HQ station of MEGS on some 30 occasions but needs to work some individual members in order to get his award. MEGS members, please identify yourselves on air.

One side of the paddle wire to the key socket works well for Jim with a 'rocking wrist' and I have found others using the dash side of a bug. This is not too far removed from the old "side swiper" so perhaps a little practice here would provide an even easier way of non electronic keying.

"We have a duty to preserve Morse from an historic perspective. As the professionals abandon the mode then we have a duty to preserve it in the same way that steam train buffs maintain engines in working order for future generations to experience". Too true Mike (G0ROT) and we have the advantage that no-one is melting our engines down for scrap.

G3WGL (self designated Old Doom and Gloom) aligns with my observation that if 3,000 new Amateurs are appearing each month then there is no reason why there should not be 3,000 CW passes each month.

He tells me that Mike Hall, KE4GBE said to him "Nol-ly, I have joined a new organisation, its called FISTS, have you heard of it"? Mike is Nr 1911 and our congratulations to Sherry and he as proud parents of a recent source of QRM, Hayley Merrill.

G3KQN sent along his brass 12 months ago for a rubber stamp which materialised as G4KQN. He was delighted to accept stickers in lieu and whilst I am delighted about this, I am also deeply aggrieved that this delay whilst not of my making, should have been necessary.

Congrats to 2E1CSR who is now 2E0AMW. I know Geoff was waiting for this since he cancelled a batch of QSL cards in anticipation. Another change of call - or rather an addition - is G4KLF. Tony has been allocated the call A45ZN and for the next two years will be acting as technical adviser the the Royal Oman ARS and their official cw examiner. He is active most days on the key as either A45ZN or with the club call of A47RS and seems to be concentrating on 160m at approximately 0000z on or about 1.840. Not much chance from here Tony - the W3DZZ does not take kindly to being tuned at that freq but will sure be looking out for you on the other bands. de Geo

FISTS SLOW NET

You might be thinking that the FISTS Slow Net has kind of hit the dumps, but while our numbers of check-ins has dropped, we're still there plugging away on 3682 KHz at 0200Z every Wednesday and Friday morning (that's Tuesday and Thursday nights US time). Thanks

to Mike, N9JIY, who has agreed to take NCS of the net on the first and third Thursdays of each month.

I have some evening commitments that I can't get out of. If you have been a regular on the FSN, and you don't hear me around at the right time, PLEASE feel free to start the net yourself with this preamble: CQ FSN The FISTS Slow Net of the FISTS CW Club All welcome QND QNZ pse QNN (your call and name) GE FISTS QNI DE (your call) QNI K.

That's it. You are in control, and your life will have been changed forever. Don't worry about mistakes, we're supposed to make mistakes on a training net, no one cares if you do. If you want to take over from me when I'm NCS, just ask, I'm really looking for help. This is a training net, and no one should feel shy about making any sort of error. You're supposed to!

Kudos to Ken VA3KEW, a new FISTS who was introduced to FISTS through the FSN (I think, or maybe it was via WB2FXK). He's a regular and has come along well with his ability to handle traffic. The purpose of FISTS Slow Net is to train hounds for the NTS nets. I haven't seen much evidence of that happening, though. EXCEPT for Ken, who QNIs regularly on the Ohio Sunrise Slow Net, especially on Saturday and Sunday mornings. I'm NCS then, and welcome Ken's participation. I also welcome anyone else who wants to try his/her traffic handling skills on an NTS net to check into the OSSN — 3577 KHz at 0645 Eastern Time Mon-Fri, or for those who like to sleep in, same frequency but at 0800 Eastern Time Saturday and Sunday and holidays. C'mon, if you've been itching to try out a "real" net, join me on Saturday and Sunday morning.

I spoke by phone to Dale N3MEE. Dale was a regular on FSN, improving dramatically with his CW, mainly because of his participation on the net. Unfortunately, Dale's wife passed away a few months ago, and he has been otherwise occupied. He is doing all right though, and is contemplating a return to FSN. We extend, again, our sincere sympathies Dale, and look forward to your return to the net.

OK, for those of you who haven't been checking in lately, how about it! We need you and we need your traffic. Christmas season is almost upon us, and what a great way to send your Christmas greetings, via amateur radio through the traffic nets. Till we see you on the net, Arf! and 73 Pete K8OUA

FISTS FALL SPRINT

The first annual FISTS Fall Sprint attracted a good crowd of FISTS and non-FISTS, and all seemed to agree that it was an enjoyable and popular event. While the Fall Sprint was a clone of the Spring Sprint, it had many more participants and better conditions, resulting in higher scores all around. One thing that is certain is that the comments of those participating indicated that they enjoyed themselves. Conditions on the afternoon were fine, and we had results from 80, 40, 20, and 15 meters, a great improvement over the Spring, where we were limited to 20 and 40 meters.

It was great to see stations like "the Sub" — W3XX — with Brian, K9VKY, at the periscope (I still haven't worked the sub, Brian, but hope to soon). Club station WA7YYY, the call of the Cowitz FISTS club out in Washington (Stu, K7WF, operating) put in a good signal and ran up a very respectable score as usual. Dayton ARC call W8BI, with Charlie, KA8OQF, operating, did a superb job as you will see below. It is good to see FISTS representing groups and special stations like this. Well done, fellows, and keep it up.

I've received 18 logs, a respectable increase from the Spring Sprint total of 13 logs. OK, now that you're on the edge of your seats waiting for the results, let's see who won. Again it is easy to see how handy it is to come from the heartland, specifically, Ohio. Three of the first four places in the overall results were Ohioans.

N8FU-3828 K8OUA-3549 AC4WH-3360 W8BI (KA8OQF)-2329 K8KFJ-1575 KE3NV-1274 WA7YYY (K7WF)-1232 N8UJZ-1155 KE8SX-891 WO8E-759 KG8QT-600 WZ8C-518 K7WF-450 N3LBC-376 KB8OOM-324 VA3KEW-200

WB2FXK-75 K3WWP-20 Check Log: N8IAG/W3XX Comments: "Did enjoy myself even though I did not get a chance to play the whole thing- the bands seemed to cooperate." KG8QT: "Got home for half an hour of the test, HI." WB2FXK: "I have never been in a contest- I had a lot of fun, though." KE3NV: "Sprint was fun - condx poor- PA QSO (Party) plus QRP Test = QRM! Very happy to be a FISTS . . . never thought I'd really love CW. . . " N3LBC: "Nice 'Test'. Short es sweet — didn't get started till abt 1.45 — had dinner guest, couldn't wait for them to leave! HI. Was surprised to hear G3RSP." KE8SX: "With the PA QSO Party and the QRP contest . . . I didn't have much time (for) the FISTS Sprint. I did get to work my friend KB3BFQ for about four QSOs. I suggest you have a QRP category in all FISTS contests." K3WWP: "Enjoyed the 1st time experience, however company arrived and put an end to my participation." VA3KEW: "This was my first contact with any FISTS members and I really enjoyed it." KB8OOM: "Had a great time. Had a nice run on 40 M where I was in demand. HI." N8FU: "This was the first time I believe I stayed from start to finish. What a great fun idea this Sprint was! I don't care if I'm not in the top score — I really enjoyed it!! WO8E: "Had a great time in the contest! Lots of fun." AC4WH.

Finally, many thanks also to the DX FISTS and non-FISTS who participated and helped us boost our multipliers. You guys (and that includes YLs) also can send in your logs. We have not had a DX log in the results yet, but maybe for the Spring Sprint. Thanks to each and every one of you for participating and making this Sprint such a success for the club and most importantly, for CW.

If anyone wants to see the final results in detail, I'll be glad to send them if you include an SASE.

The next Sprint will be the Spring Sprint — watch the Keynote and QST for it. 73, Pete K8OUA